<u>IN THE CLAIMS</u>:

Please amend Claims 1, 12, and 23 as follows.

1.   (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus, comprising:

image-data input means for inputting image data;

specific-image determination means for determining whether the image data input by said image-data input means represents a specific image having predetermined characteristics;

re-input determination means for determining whether to output a signal urging re-input of the image data input by said image-data input means, <u>in accordance with a difficulty of determining whether the image data represents a specific image</u>; and

signal output means for outputting the signal urging re-input of the image data, in accordance with a result of the determination by said re-input determination means.

2.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said specific-image determination means determines whether the image data represents a copy-prohibited image.

3.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said re-input determination means determines whether re-input of the image data is to be urged by determining a difficulty in the determination by said specific-image determination means.

4.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein said re-input determination means determines whether re-input of the image data is to be urged by determining a difficulty in the determination of whether the image data represents a copy-prohibited image.

5.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said re-input determination means comprises difficulty calculation means for calculating a difficulty in the determination of whether the image data represents the specific image, and difficulty determination means for determining whether the determination by said specific-image determination means is difficult based on the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means.

6.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein said re-input determination means comprises difficulty calculation means for calculating a difficulty in the determination of whether the image data represents a copy-prohibited image, and difficulty determination means for determining whether the determination by said specific-image determination means is difficult based on the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means.

7.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said re-input determination means determines whether re-input of the image data is to be

urged from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data.

8.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 5, wherein said difficulty calculation means calculates the difficulty in the determination of the specific image from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data, and wherein said difficulty determination means determines whether the determination by said specific-image determination means is difficult by comparing data of the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means with a predetermined value.

9.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 6, wherein said difficulty calculation means calculates the difficulty in the determination of a copy-prohibited image from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data, and wherein said difficulty determination means determines whether the determination of a copy-prohibited image is difficult by comparing data of the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means with a predetermined value.

10.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein data of the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means comprises an angle of the original with respect to a scanning direction of the image represented by the input image data.

11. (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein data of the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means comprises a deviation of the original from a predetermined position with respect to a scanning direction of the image represented by the input image data.

12. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling an image processing apparatus, said method comprising the steps of:

inputting image data;

determining whether the image data input in said image-data input step represents a specific image having predetermined characteristics;

determining whether to output a signal urging re-input of the image data input in said image-data input step, in accordance with a difficulty of determining whether the image data represents a specific image; and

outputting the signal urging re-input of the image data, in accordance with a result of the determination in said re-input determining step.

13. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 12, wherein in said specific-image determining step, it is determined whether the image data input in said image-data input step represents a copy-prohibited image.

14. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 12, wherein in said re-input determining step, it is determined whether re-input of the image data is to be urged by determining a difficulty in the determination in said specific-image determining step of whether the image data represents the specific image.

15. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, wherein in said re-input determining step, it is determined whether re-input of the image data is to be urged by determining a difficulty in the determination in said specific-image determining step of whether or not the image data represents a copy-prohibited image.

16. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 12, wherein said re-input determining step comprises a difficulty calculation step of calculating a difficulty in the determination in said specific-image determining step, and a difficulty determination step of determining whether the determination in said specific-image determining step is difficult based on the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step.

17. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, wherein said re-input determining step comprises a difficulty calculation step of calculating a difficulty in determining whether the image data represents a copy-prohibited image, and a difficulty determination step of determining whether the determination whether the image data represents a copy-prohibited image is difficult, based on the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step.

18. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, wherein in said re-input determining step, it is determined whether the re-input is to be urged from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data.

19. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 16, wherein in said difficulty calculation step, the difficulty in the determination of the specific image is calculated from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data, and wherein in said difficulty determination step, it is determined whether the determination of the specific image is difficult by comparing data of the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step with a predetermined value.

20. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 17, wherein in said difficulty calculation step, the difficulty in the determination of a copy-prohibited image is calculated from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data, and wherein in said difficulty determination step, it is determined whether the determination of a copy-prohibited image is difficult by comparing data of the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step with a predetermined value.

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 19, wherein data of the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step comprises an angle of the original with respect to a scanning direction of the image represented by the input image data.

22.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 19, wherein data of the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step comprises a deviation of the original from a predetermined position with respect to a scanning direction of the image represented by the input image data.

23.   (Currently Amended) A storage medium, capable of being read by a computer, storing a program to cause an image processing apparatus to execute the steps of:

inputting image data;

determining whether the image data input in said image-data input step represents a specific image having predetermined characteristics;

determining whether to output a signal urging re-input of the image data input in said image-data input step, in accordance with a difficulty of determining whether the image data represents a specific image; and

outputting the signal urging re-input of the image data, in accordance with a result of the determination in said re-input determining step.